

Mosquitoes and West Nile Virus Potential for Flooded Conditions

Flooded conditions in the early spring or immediately after heavy rains are not conducive for mosquito hatching or development. This is due to:

- water levels being too high;
 - cold water temperature;
 - too much wave and/or movement of water;
 - little vegetation and other protective habitat for larvae.
- However, when water levels recede, smaller standing water bodies develop that are stranded from the main creek or lake. These can become quite stagnant and still, and provide good habitat for mosquitoes to hatch and develop.
- If these stagnant water areas persist into June and July, they can become good habitat for *Culex tarsalis*, the mosquito that carries West Nile virus. These mosquitoes lay their eggs on the water surface and are more common during the hotter weather of June, July and August.

Precautions

- Control of mosquitoes after flooding is very difficult and not always effective, particularly if the flooding has been extensive and there are numerous pools spread over a large area. Precautions should be taken to avoid being bitten by the large numbers of mosquitoes that may emerge after significant flooding events.
- People can reduce their risk of being bitten or exposed to WNV through the use of personal protective measures (i.e. covering up, using repellents), reducing exposure from dusk to dawn, ensuring that screens are on windows and doors and using screened-in porches or gazebos
- Cottage and homeowners should try to drain stranded water bodies particularly if they are in close proximity to residences.
- Drainage is not always practical, particularly where the water body is large. As an alternative small, isolated pools could be treated with the biological control product, *Bacillus thuringiensis var. israelensis* (*B.t.i.*) (i.e. Vectobac ; Aquabac Mosquito Dunks[®]; Mosquito Bits[®]) if mosquito larvae are present in the water.